

**Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths
(CANS)**

Communimetrics

Online Training and Certification

Manual

**Comprehensive Services Act
for Troubled and at-Risk Youth and Their Families
(CSA)
Commonwealth of Virginia
July 2008**

Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS) Online Training and Certification Manual

Background

The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment tool has been selected to serve as the mandatory uniform assessment instrument for children, youth and families served by the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) in Virginia. The CANS family of tools was developed by John S. Lyons, Ph.D., of the University of Ottawa, and many stakeholders across multiple states. Dr. Lyons refers to the CANS as the product of a “mass collaboration.”

Adopted for use in Virginia are the CANS Comprehensive Versions for children ages birth to four (0-4) and ages five to seventeen (5-17) and the Reassessment Versions for both age groups. Only the CANS Comprehensive and Reassessment tools for the age 5-17 population are mandatory for use by CSA.

CANS is copyrighted by the Praed Foundation, 1999. There is no cost to use these tools. However, CANS users must be trained and certified annually.

Introduction to Communimetrics Online Training

The Communimetrics Group, LLC, has worked with Dr. Lyons for several years to create an online training software program for certification in the use of the CANS. Other states, including New Jersey and Indiana, provide online certification through software developed by Communimetrics.

Dr. Lyons does not charge for the use of the CANS, but requires that individuals who use the CANS must be trained and certified annually. Annual certification helps ensure reliable use of the tools and successful communication with families, youth and other child service systems. The use of the Communimetrics Web site will be the primary means of training and certification on the CANS in Virginia.

Super Users will be trained by Dr. Lyons in two day “live” sessions beginning in September 2008. Super Users will be local CANS “experts” and available to assist users in their localities with the online certification training, clinical questions and with the CANS data entry software (not yet available.) Communimetrics also has a “Help Desk” feature which may be accessed by using the “Contact Us” link on the website. Virginia will have about 150 Super Users trained by February 2009 to support the CANS implementation.

Additional live training may be provided either by Dr. Lyons or other approved trainers during the implementation year.

The training certification website is
<http://www.communimetrics.com/VirginiaCSA/Default.aspx>

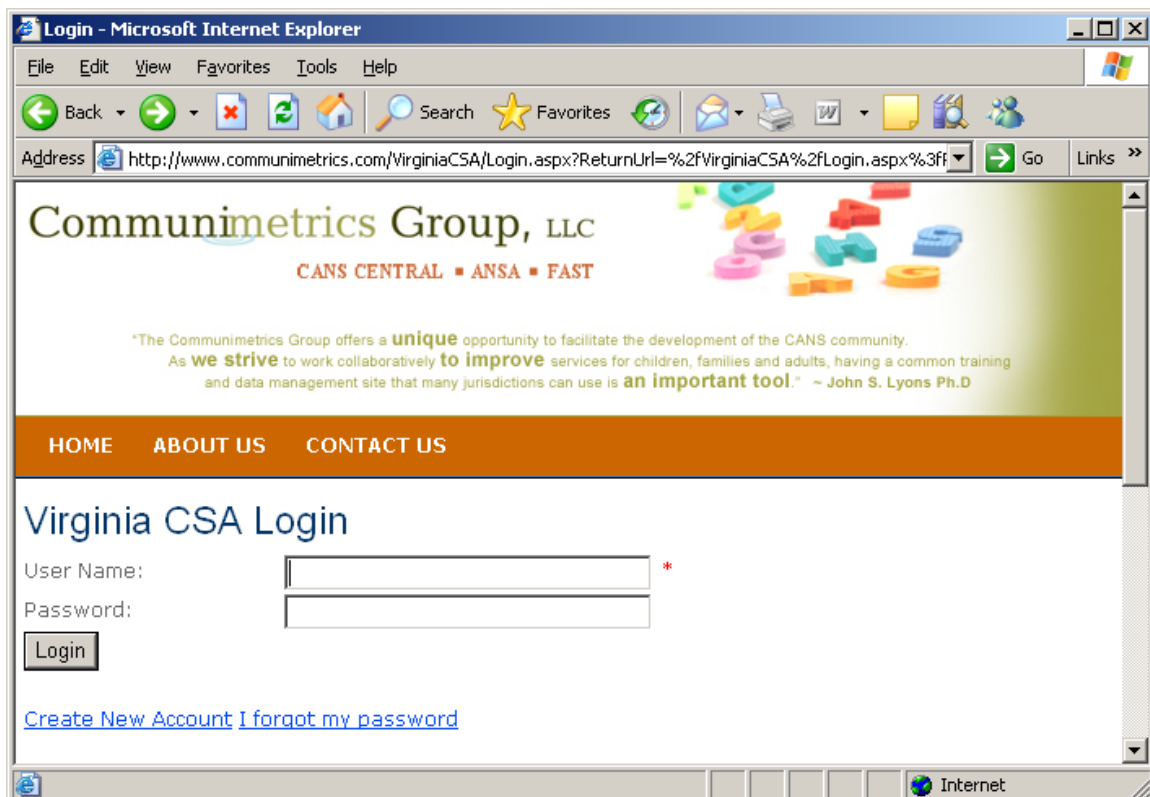
The online program links to:

- Virginia CANS manuals and scores sheets
- Streaming video presentations of the overview of the use of CANS
- Review of the individual items on the CANS

After watching the videos, trainees are invited to practice with on-line vignettes. To become certified, you must achieve a reliability factor of 0.70 or above. Once you have completed that goal in practice, you will be invited to attempt the certification test, using one of the randomly selected test vignettes.

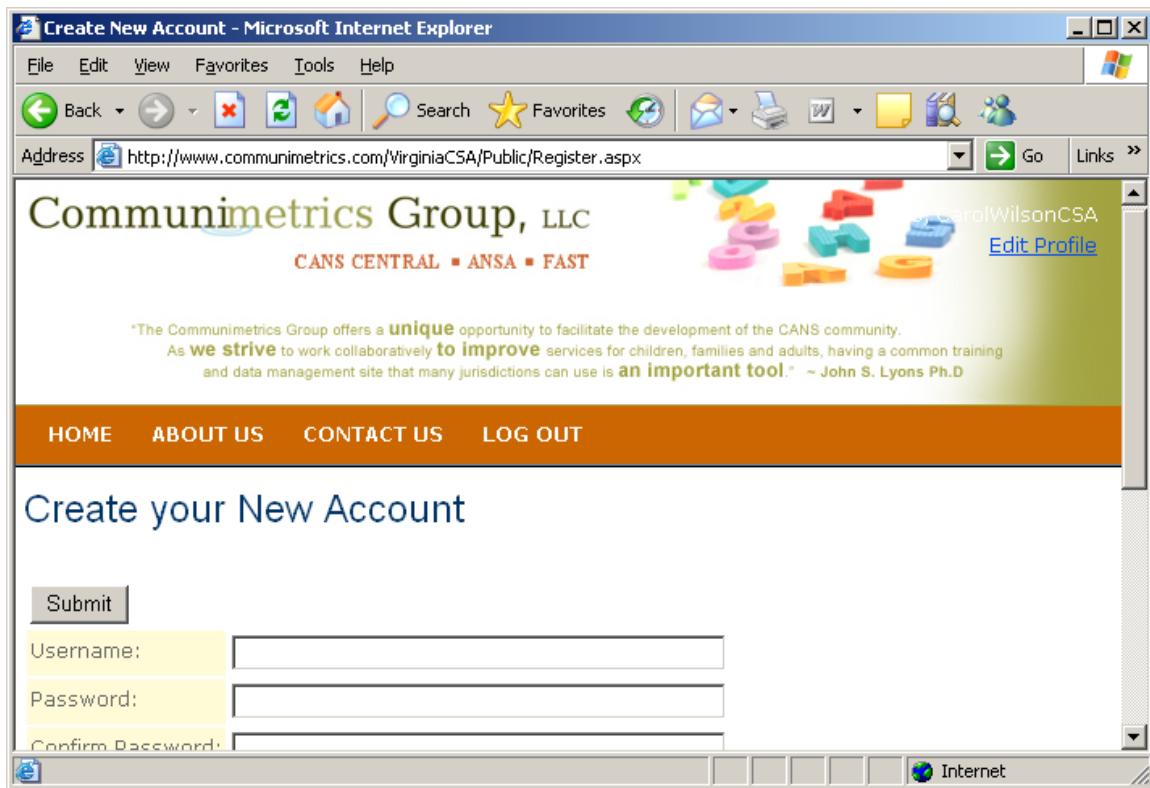
Getting Started

The first page of the website welcomes and invites visitors to register:



Click on “Create New Account.” You will be prompted to enter a User ID and password and answer identifying information.

All of the information needed to use the site is included in the text areas. Please read the instructions carefully. If you need assistance in creating an account, logging in or using the Communimetrics website, please use the “Contact Us” link for assistance.



Enter the required information. To identify your locality, click on “Please Select Locality” and choose from the listing.

Click “Submit” at the top of the page.

Once your user profile is set-up, you are ready to begin training! Allow a total of 4-5 hours to view the videos, practice using the CANS with vignettes, and take the certification test. Each of the videos displays the “play” time which will allow you to plan your work.

To view the video clips, you need a computer with a high speed internet connection. The videos and CANS items will not load using a dial-up internet connection.

Technology Requirements:

Operating System: Windows 98, ME, NT, 2000 or XP

Software: Windows Media Player 7.0 or later. Use Media Player 9 for optimal playback.

Browser: Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.0 or later.

Note: Internet Explorer is the only browser supported at this time.

Additional Equipment: Speakers or headphones

Videos:

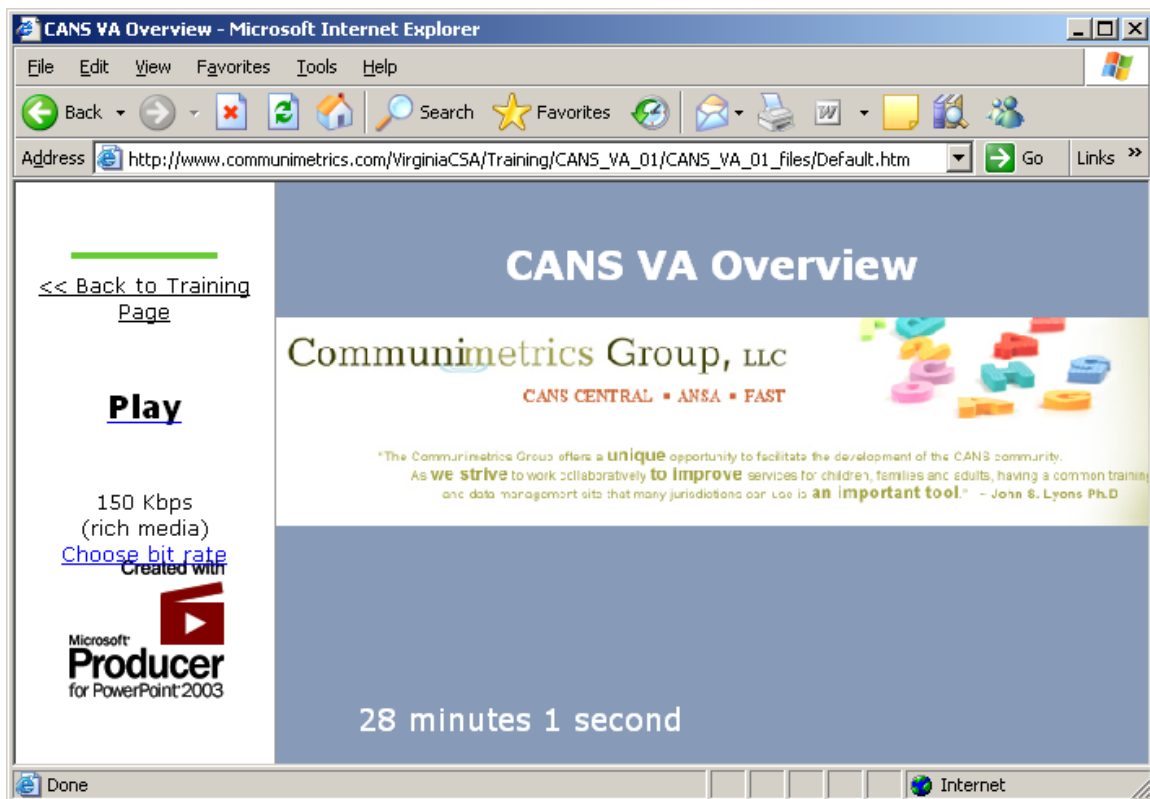
To begin, click on “Training” on the left side of your page.

A series of short videos are presented listed under “Virginia CANS”. *Note: The Indiana links are listed below the Virginia ones. Be sure to view the Virginia videos.*

The videos normally take several minutes to load. View the videos in sequence beginning with “CANS Overview”. You may want to watch the “Overview” more than once as it contains key principles of using the CANS.

Very Important Note: *Watching the videos is essential to understanding how the CANS “works”. Don’t try to take the tests without watching the videos. Use of the CANS is very different from the way that clinical practitioners are trained to assess clients. CANS requires the assessor to isolate one behavior at a time, rather than view the person in his or her environment. To rate CANS, you have to shift to a descriptive (not assign cause/effect) way of thinking.*

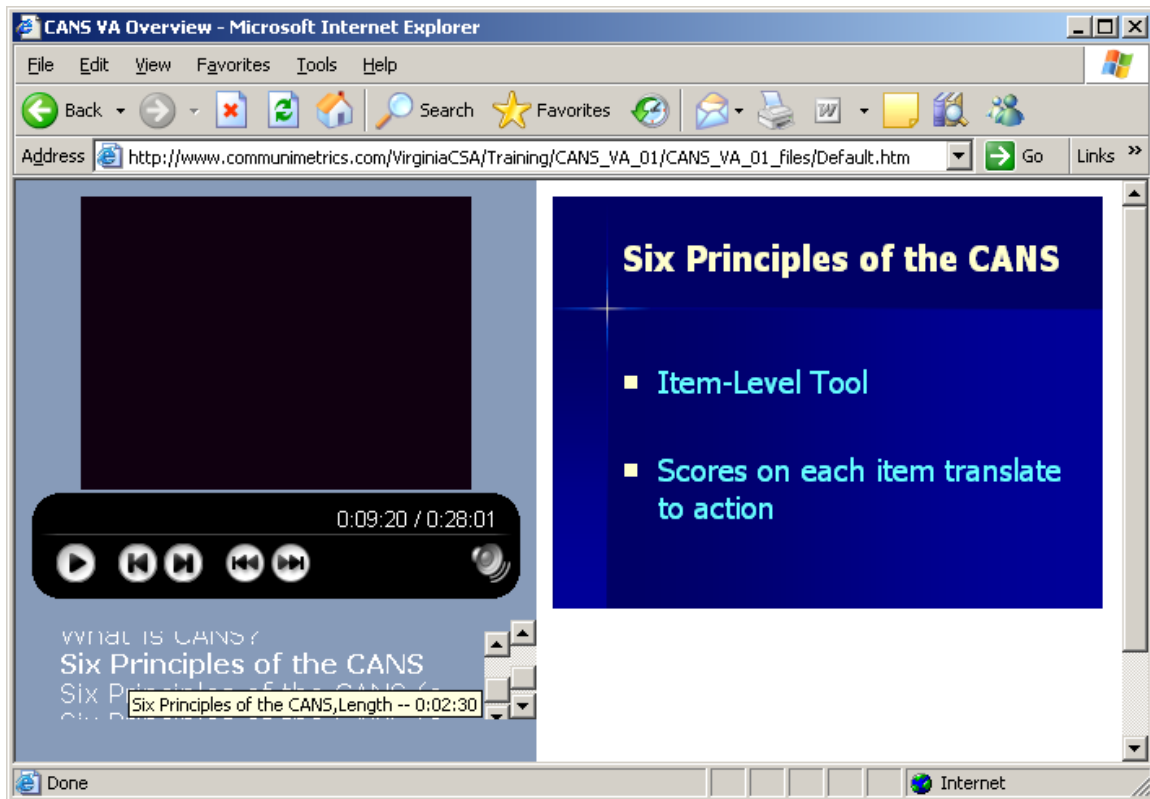
Slides with related information appear with the video clips.



Note the time is displayed at the bottom of the page. (The first video is the longest.)

Hit “play” to begin.

Or if you do not wish to proceed, click on “Back to Training Page” to exit.



When the video begins, you will see Dr. John Lyons at the left top of the page. Using your computer speakers or headphones, you will hear Dr. Lyons discuss each of the topics.

Below the picture are buttons that allow you to navigate the video-pause, resume, forward ten seconds, back ten seconds. (Note: The forward and back ten seconds buttons may not work until the video is completely loaded.)

Below the navigation buttons is the outline of the session. You can skip ahead or go back to a section by clicking on the topic.

The slide presentations are on the right side of the page.

Once you have completed viewing the video, you can go back to the training page. Scroll up on the second set of arrows to go back to the training page. Or you can proceed to the next video by clicking on the text on the left side of the page.

Practice Test:

After completion of the training videos, you are ready to take the practice test. You can take the test as many times as needed. Rating at least two practice vignettes will make the certification test easier. When you have completed a test, a message displays your score and whether or not you have achieved a reliable score. Scores below 0.70 are not reliable. *Note: “Score” relates to your reliability. “Rate” refers to your evaluation of the questions regarding the child/youth.*

- Click on “Practice Tests” to begin the practice vignettes.
- Select “New Test” for the CANS Comprehensive ages 5-17.
- Vignettes and tests are available for the CANS ages 0-4. However, these are not required for CSA.
- Certification must be for use of the Comprehensive CANS for ages 5-17.

Vignette Assumption Tip: Assume that a complete assessment has been done. If no information about an item appears in the vignette, assume there is no evidence of that need or strength.

Practice Test Form - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites

Address <http://www.communimetrics.com/VirginiaCSA/PracticeExam/PracticeTestForm.aspx?TestId=0> Go Links

HOME ABOUT US CONTACT US LOG OUT

Practice Test

Submit Save As Draft Save And Continue Cancel

LIFE DOMAIN FUNCTIONING

Family	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
Living Situation	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
Sleep	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
Social Functioning	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
Sexual Development	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
Recreational	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
Developmental (1)	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
Communication	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3
Judgment	<input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3

Done Internet

Fred is a 16 year old who has been diagnosed with ADHD. Fred lives with his parents. His father is an alcohol and occasional drug user. Fred's mother is the "peace keeper"; she tries to make everyone happy at all times. Despite her efforts, Fred's parents argue often. Both of Fred's parents work and they earn a comfortable income. Fred has

The testing page is a split screen. The questions with scoring bubbles to the right are on the left side of the split screen. The vignette displays on the right.

LIFE DOMAIN FUNCTIONING					
Family	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	
Living Situation	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	
Sleep	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	
Social Functioning	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	
Sexual Development	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	
Recreational	<input type="radio"/> 0	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	

Hide	
0	Child is doing well in relationships with family members.
1	Child is doing adequately in relationships with family members

To see the ratings (0-3) for each item, click on the item to the link (“Family” is displayed in this example.) The vignette displays in its entirety below the item rating definitions. Or you can highlight the vignette, paste into a Word document and print for reference while you are taking the test.

Click on one bubble to rate each item. Rate all items. Your test will not submit unless all items are rated.

When you have completed rating all items:

- Click on “Save as Draft” if you want to return to the test later and review/correct any item(s).
- Click on “Submit” to have your scores graded for reliability.

If you have not completed all items, the ones that have not been marked will display on the list highlighted. A message will provide the number of incomplete items.

After you click on “Submit”, a message displays your score and whether you achieved a reliable score. If you did not achieve reliability on your practice test, review the correct rating for each item. On the following page the shaded numbers to the right of the bubbles indicate the recommended rating for the item. Note the difference in your rating from the correct rating.

Completed Practice Test - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites Reload Print Mail Address Bar Links

Address <http://www.communimetrics.com/VirginiaCSA/PracticeExam/ShowCompletePracticeTest.aspx?TestId=65> Go

Completed Practice Test

[Practice Test History](#)

Your score is: 0.73

Legend: Correct Off by 1 Off by 2 Off by 3

LIFE DOMAIN FUNCTIONING		
	Your Answer	Correct Answer
Family	2	1
Living Situation	2	1
Sleep	0	0
Social Functioning	3	3
Sexual Development	0	0
Recreational	3	2
Developmental (1)	0	1

Diana is a 14 old female wh resides with l mother and younger brot She does not have contact her biological father. Her biological fath is incarcerate for physically

Done Internet

The system will save your practice tests as drafts or as completed.

After achieving reliability, you are ready to take the certification test! (next page)

Certification Testing:

Click on “Certification Exam List” on the left of the training page.



Remember, all of the CANS manuals may be found under the “Resources” link to the left of the training page. Click on the appropriate document if you wish to use this reference while taking the test.

Note: The Comprehensive Version of the CANS includes modules which are specific topic areas such as Developmental Disability, Trauma, Juvenile Justice Involvement, etc. A score of “1” or greater on certain items will require that the appropriate module be completed. However, use of the modules is not included in the online training. More information about the modules is found in the Virginia “Glossary of Items.”

Rate all items.

Remember the vignette assumption on page 7 of this manual.

Click on “Save and Continue” every ten minutes to avoid losing your work.

Submit.

Good luck!

When you submit your certification test, you receive your CANS Reliability Score instantly. Unlike the practice tests, recommended ratings are not available for review. You may continue to try as often as you need to become certified. If you are unable to achieve certification after numerous attempts, contact either the Communimetrics Help Desk, or the Office of Comprehensive Services. In the future, after Super Users have been trained, they will be available as a local resource.

Certification Test History:

Click on certification test history to review your tests and ratings. Your certification number appears in this record.

Verify Certification:

To print documentation of your certification, click on “Verify Certification” from the main menu on the Training page. Please print a copy for your records. The system will retain your scores and verification of certification. Super Users in each locality will be responsible for ensuring that case managers are certified prior to the use of the CANS.

Once we are able to use the online CANS data entry, access will not be permitted unless a certification is verified.

Annual certification reminder: If you list your e-mail address, you will receive a reminder in 11 months to be recertified.

Other features on the Communimetrics site:

Resources include:

- All CANS documents
- CANS Glossary of Items
- CANS Online Training and Certification Manual
- Frequently Asked Questions (being developed)

Information regarding CANS training and certification will also be posted on the CSA website at www.csa.virginia.org

*Many thanks to the individuals in the State of Indiana's
Behavioral Health Assessment System,
Family and Social Services Administration
for their assistance in developing this training manual.*